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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 091017

SIPDIS

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TAGS: AEMR ASEC CASC KFLO MARR PREL PINR AMGT CD

SUBJECT: TFGG01: GEORGIA TASK FORCE SITUATION REPORT NO. 35

CLASSIFIED BY: Senior Watch Officer Thomas T. Jung, S/ES-O,
for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

RUSSIANS PUT LIMITS ON WITHDRAWAL

¶1. (C) MFA officials claim the Russian peacekeeping presence will expand significantly within South Ossetia. They defended the need for a buffer zone and do not believe OSCE forces constitute an international mechanism. (Moscow 2523)

¶2. (U) Media report Russian troops are setting up a permanent base in Karaleti. (independent.co.uk.com)

¶3. (U) Georgian troops reentered Gori for the first time in two weeks. (nytimes.com)

¶4. (SBU) OSCE monitors report no problems with movement and substantial commercial traffic on the East-West highway. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi telcon)

¶5. (U) Thousands of Georgians protested as Russian troops entrenched themselves in western Georgia, controlling access to Poti. Russian forces set up a checkpoint near a military base in Senaki. (AP)

IDPS RETURNING; GEORGIAN INFANT WILL NOT TRAVEL

¶16. (SBU) OSCE monitors estimate 60% of Gori's population has returned. Electricity and gas are available in some areas while concerns still exist about possible unexploded ordnance at key infrastructure points. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi telcon)

¶17. (SBU) The GOG is informing citizens that it is safe to return to their homes. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi telcon)

¶18. (SBU) U.S. military doctors report the Georgian infant's health will not permit travel. EUCOM and Embassy Berlin to cease medevac planning. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi telcon)

CODEL LUGAR REPORT

¶19. (SBU) Senator Lugar met with AmCham, key opposition party members, and Minister for Reintegration Yakobishvili. All groups expressed concern over Russian control of Poti. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi telcon)

USG AID NOW EXCEEDS \$13.1 MILLION; USS MCFAUL ARRIVES

¶10. (U) DoD and USAID delivered an additional \$2.5 million in humanitarian assistance. (USAID/DCHA HA Fact Sheet)

¶11. (SBU) A ceremony marked the ship's arrival in Batumi where U.S. personnel started offloading 72 pallets of aid. Four other U.S. ships carrying assistance are scheduled to arrive this week. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi telcon, AP)

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EMBASSY EFMS RETURNING

¶12. (SBU) Half will return today and the remainder on August 25. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi telcon)

¶13. (U) Minimize considered.
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